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A STUDY OF THE INTRAMURAL SPORTS PROGRAM
OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

DAVID C. GOULD II, MAJ, USAF
B.S., U. S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1987

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
2000

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE


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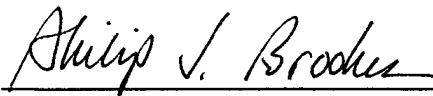
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

DO SPORTS BUILD CHARACTER? A STUDY OF THE INTRAMURAL SPORTS PROGRAM OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY by Maj David C. Gould II, USAF, 89 pages.

This study examines the premise that "sports build character." Educational institutions in the United States have used sports participation to build character for over 100 years, but verification of whether sport is an effective tool to accomplish character development has only recently been examined. The United States Air Force Academy uses participation in its intramural sports program to accomplish character development, and this study uses this process to analyze the larger issue of character development in sports.

The analysis of available information showed that sports do not necessarily build character merely by participating in them. In order to effectively accomplish character development, educational methodologies specifically focused on developing character had to be present within the sports program. When these methodologies were present, sports programs were found to be outstanding at developing character in its participants.

The intramural sports program at the Academy has character development as one of its objectives but does not include a specific character development component into its program. With no empirical findings to evaluate the intramural program's effect on character development, no definitive conclusions can be drawn as to the program's effectiveness at character development. But with no component of the intramural program that specifically focuses on character development, such as a moral intervention strategy, the available research strongly infers that the intramural sports program at the Air Force Academy does not support the academy's mission of character development.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFCWI	Air Force Cadet Wing Instruction
AHOI	Athletic Department Operating Instruction
MD	Mission Directive
USAFA	United States Air Force Academy

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The use of sports to develop young men and women both physically and mentally has been a tradition in the United States for over one-hundred years. It is seen as an excellent tool for developing self-confidence, building social skills, and developing character in its participants (Sage 1998, 15-18). But verifying these expectations, specifically the assumption that sports build character, has been overlooked for the most part due to the fact that most people asked would say that it is a fact--"sports build character" (Sage 1998, 15-18). Until the last ten years, little or no scientific efforts have been focused on verifying this belief. But in the last decade, researchers have taken a look at this very aspect of sports trying to determine if participation in sports, and specifically team sports, actually does develop character.

Origins of the idea of sport as a builder of character have existed in the United States for over a hundred years (Sage 1998, 15-18). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was no merit seen in sport other than enjoyment, no clear social value to it, and no sense that it contributed to the improvement of an individual's character (Mrozek 1983, xiii). But in England during the mid-1800s a tradition arose that profoundly influenced sporting practice in the United States. With emergence of student teams in British private secondary boarding school for boys, school sports won recognition as a medium for socialization, enculturation, and social control, and they became imbued with a moralistic ideology (Mangan 1981).

Sports played by British students gradually became valued by the headmasters more for the qualities of social character they were presumed to develop than for the

physical exercise they provided. In a description of British boarding school sports, a sociologist observed that they were considered an excellent way to develop “moral authority and exemplary character in England's evolving ruling class. . . . Here the ideal was intended to allow boys to prove themselves as potential leaders on the playing fields through moral courage, devoted team work, and group spirit” (Armstrong 1984, 315).

Although no one ever empirically verified the social-developmental effects of school sport, belief that sport did develop favorable character traits was unshakable in Britain and this idea transferred to the United States as well (Sage 1998, 15-18). It was a popular saying in England that “the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton” (a private boarding school) suggesting that Lord Arthur Wellington, the victorious British general at the Battle of Waterloo, had acquired skills and values while playing sports at Eton that prepared him to defeat Napoleon (Sage 1998, 15-18). In the United States too, this idea was also accepted. General Douglas Macarthur said “Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that on other days and other fields will bear the fruits of victory” (United States Military Academy 1990, 262). Among the many positive aspects of sports participation, again the reoccurring idea that was accepted and espoused was that “sports build character.”

This assertion was, and still is, frequently made by community leaders, school officials, parents, and even average citizens when a discussion turns to the purpose of organized sport for children of all ages. Sport, it is argued, provides a social environment for acquiring culturally valued personal and social attitudes, values, and behaviors. Moreover, it is implied that what is learned in the sport setting transfers to other spheres of life (Sage 1998, 15-18). So this idea solidifies a widespread faith in sport as an agent

of social development and a medium for the formation of a particularly ideological consciousness. Sports participation is somehow seen as reinforcing only positive character traits while dissuading negative ones.

Part of the reason for a lack of studies concerning character development in sports is the ambiguity towards a common definition for character. Researchers have studied character for thousands of years, but there exists very different ideas of exactly what it is. Some of the definitions for character include morality, values, and an individual's personality. Because of the differing interpretations for what character is, programs designed to positively influence, or develop character are often not clearly focused on their intended goals.

Many educational institutions use sports participation as a process to develop character in their students, but most have not attempted to verify the effectiveness of these sports programs at actually developing the traits and habits that contribute to positive character development. The United States Air Force Academy is one of these educational institutions. The mission of the Air Force Academy is:

TO INSPIRE AND DEVELOP OUTSTANDING YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN
TO BECOME AIR FORCE OFFICERS WITH KNOWLEDGE, CHARACTER
AND DISCIPLINE MOTIVATED TO LEAD THE WORLD'S GREATEST
AEROSPACE FORCE IN SERVICE TO THE NATION. (United States Air
Force Academy 1999, 21)

The development of character is one of the fundamental components of this mission. One of the ways the Academy accomplishes this is to have various character development programs present in every aspect of the cadet's lives while at the Academy (United States Air Force Academy 1999, 90). Overseeing these character development programs is the Academy's Center for Character Development. The center's vision is to

provide cadets a structure that offers the best character development opportunities available. The Character Development Commission, a group of senior officers from all of the Academy mission elements and chaired by the Dean of the Faculty, guides the development, establishing eight Character Development Outcomes and publishing a strategy to achieve them. As summarized in these outcomes, the Academy's objective is to graduate officers who:

1. Have forthright integrity and voluntarily decide the right thing to do and do it;
2. Are selfless in service to the country, the Air Force and their subordinates;
3. Are committed to excellence in the performance of their personal and professional responsibilities;
4. Respect the dignity of all human beings;
5. Are decisive, even when facing high risk;
6. Take full responsibility for their decisions;
7. Have the self-discipline, stamina, and courage to do their duty well under even the extreme and prolonged conditions of national defense; and
8. Appreciate the significance of spiritual values and beliefs to their own character development and that of the community (United States Air Force Academy 1999, 89).

The Academy uses sports participation, both in intercollegiate and intramural competitions, as yet another method of developing character. The athletic department is the division that is responsible for sports activities at the Academy and contained within its mission statement too is the assertion of sports as a developer of character. In the

mission statement of the athletic department, it says, "The athletic program . . . builds character" (United States Air Force Academy 2000).

In chapter 2, this study will review the different definitions of character to discover if a common working definition for character exists. Following this, a review of traditional classroom methodologies for character development will cover educators' differing views of character and how to positively affect it. Finally, character development in sports will be examined, looking at recent research findings concerning sports participation's effect on character. Once this literature is reviewed, this study's primary question will be addressed by comparing the findings of research reviewed in chapter two to the structure of the Academy's intramural sports program to determine if, based upon this research, the intramural sports program is set up so that it is effective at developing character.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to evaluate whether sports programs are effective in achieving character development. This study will specifically determine if the Air Force Academy's intramural sports program supports the Academy's mission of character development.

Importance

As an institution of higher learning, the Academy attempts to fulfill the goal of providing its students with a quality education. The purpose of education is stated as the preparation of students to be successful in the future. It does this by the transmission of knowledge, the training of students how to think and solve problems, and the development of character. Martin Luther King Jr. summed this up when he said,

“Intelligence plus character--that is the goal of a true education” (John Templeton Foundation 2000). But the Academy's mission is not only to provide an undergraduate educational experience; it is to prepare the cadets to be leaders in the United States Air Force. The military would argue that the profession of arms places an even greater emphasis on character development. A military officer has the responsibility for the very lives of his subordinates. In very few other professions are the responsibilities as great. Therefore, the objective of producing leaders with the absolute finest character is of the utmost importance.

In order to do this, the Air Force Academy incorporates positive character development components into all aspects of its cadet's lives. It has established eight Character Development Outcomes that focus the institution's efforts towards the development of specific outcomes reflected in the definition of character. Therefore, it would conflict with the Academy's mission to have any activity or program that produced outcomes contradictory to the goals of its mission.

The athletic department states that the athletic programs develop character. This study will determine if the structure of the intramural sports program contributes to the mission of the Academy at developing character. The findings of recent research testing the effects of sports on character would have a direct impact on the Air Force Academy since a major part of its athletic department is its intramural sports program.

The implications of this study are not however limited to the Air Force Academy. All educational institutions that use sports to develop character could be impacted if participation in sports is shown to not be effective at positively affecting character. Therefore, the importance of this study is that it can impact all educational institutions

that use sports to develop character, specifically the Air Force Academy since it stresses character development so much.

Concentration

This study will limit itself to the review of sports participation as an effective developer of character. It will examine the existing structure and the processes of the intramural program at the United States Air Force Academy to achieve positive character development outcomes. It will review and evaluate the processes the intramural program uses for character development to determine if the Academy's intramural program supports the Academy's mission of character development.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In order to examine the issue of whether the intramural sports program supports the Academy's mission of character development, this chapter has broken the topic down into three areas. It will cover the definition of character, review differing character development approaches in education, and review the findings from studies on sports and character development. Much of the material written about character is more emotionally based than substantive, and discussions on the topic are often reduced to posturing, reflecting personal views rather than informed opinions (Cunningham 1992). This chapter will review the literature concerning the substantive academic research in the field of character, character development, and character development in sports. Initially, the literature review will find a definition of character--what it is. Following that, the chapter will provide a review of the differing educational approaches for character development. These educational approaches have historically emphasized the focus on moral reasoning as the best method for affecting positive character development. Recently though, efforts have been made to also focus on other components such as moral behavior to positively develop character and these will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will review the literature concerning character development in sports, specifically showing some of the inherent qualities of sport as it relates to character development and the findings of research studies addressing character development efforts in sports. The chapter ends with a synthesis of this information that will provide the basis for the later evaluation of the Academy's intramural program at developing character.

A Common Definition for Character

The word “character” is rooted in the Greek word *charakter*, meaning a distinctive mark or stamp (Moody-Adams 1990). According to the *1913 Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary*, character is: “moral quality; the principles and motives that control the life.” The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines character as: “the sum of the moral and mental qualities which distinguish an individual.”

Aristotle said that character, in a general sense, was the kind of person one is and in a more specific sense, as the kind of person possessing virtues. He said that character and virtue had a key cognitive component because they included both practical wisdom and behavior. In other words, he said that character was both “knowing” and “doing.” Aristotle said, “We are what we repeatedly do,” and that character is the moral dimension of one’s self-understanding or self-definition. People of “good” character place moral concerns at the center of their identity. Although they derive self-esteem from many sources, their self-esteem is deeply influenced by their moral behavior. Character is thus that dimension of the self that leads to responsible action (Power 1997).

The John Templeton Foundation, an organization established to support the study of character and its education and development, defines character as “the constellation of strengths and weaknesses that form and reveal who we are. Our character does not consist of a single statement or a random act but of those qualities and dispositions that we practice consistently--both good and bad. Assessing our character means taking an inventory of our dominant thoughts and actions.”

Dr. Craig Cunningham submits that the phrase “character development” has often been used interchangeably with “moral development,” but points out that there is a

difference between the two. Character should be distinguished from morality, which is concerned exclusively with *ethical* thought and behavior. Character is a broader term of which morality is a part (Cunningham 1992). Character concerns a range of everyday thoughts and behavior. It is precisely this broadness of the concept of character and therefore the aims of character development that make it difficult for people and educators to agree upon what character is and how it should be taught.

Character is built up through the interaction of innate capacities within the totality of an individual's experience (Cunningham 1992). The operation of character is often subconscious: proto- or non-linguistic (Cunningham 1992). Character has been called "self-embodied knowledge," and can be conceived of as the sum of nonverbal "lessons" learned along the way (Cunningham 1992). Character is a compilation of an individual's beliefs, knowledge, morals, ethics, values, and actions--character is a part of a person's nature (Cunningham 1992). To a large extent, character *is* the person. A good character is one in which the person's subconscious habits and conscious values and ideals align. Researchers have approached character development differently based on the differences of their own understandings of what it is and how it develops. The attitudes of these researchers toward the broader goal of character development have varied with the different paradigms of their educational theories, but less upon the concept of character itself (Cunningham 1992).

Character is difficult to isolate--to verbalize, to theorize, and to operationalize. Because of this, it has been difficult to study. Many educators are more comfortable speaking about components of character instead of character itself as a whole. They point out that morality, specifically the component of character dealing with moral

reasoning leading to moral behavior, is not the same as character. Character is much broader and encompasses not only morality--specifically moral beliefs or judgments and moral behavior, but also personality traits, habits, and a host of other characteristics as well. But in an ethical context of what character is, moral beliefs and actions are central to the definition of character. A developed character can be said to be a result of an individual with moral beliefs and moral behavior. Indeed in character development education, increasing the occurrences of moral behavior is precisely what educators have been trying to affect as the desired outcome of their efforts (Cunningham 1992). Even though moral behavior can be viewed as a component of character as a whole, it is moral behavior that character development efforts wish to affect. Therefore, even though there is a difference between character and morality, this difference as it relates to character development efforts is academic because the goal of character development has been to affect the moral and ethical behavior of its students (Cunningham 1992).

Summary

As Aristotle said, there is "knowing" and then there is "doing." The United States Military Academy similarly states that character is "the knowledge to know what is right and the courage to act on that knowledge" (United State Military Academy 1993). The United States Air Force Academy defines character as "one's moral compass, the sum of those qualities of moral excellence that move a person to do the right thing despite pressures to the contrary" (United States Air Force Academy 1999, 89). Likewise, modern educators agree on the fundamental ethical components of character as being moral reasoning and moral behavior. Most of the different understandings of character seem to agree upon this two-part structure--knowing or having a virtuous ideal (more

often than not thought of as a value), and consistently acting upon it. A good or developed sense of character is seen as the consistency of one's behavior with one's moral reasoning (Power 1997). Therefore, even though there exists debate about differences in understandings, the commonality of these two components in most all of the understandings suggest that there is a common ethical definition for character: Knowing or having a virtuous ideal, belief, or value--thought of as moral reasoning, and consistently acting in accordance with this understanding--defined as moral behavior.

The purpose for initially defining character is twofold: first to provide a focus for what is meant when we speak of character, and second what the goal of character development efforts should be. This is crucial because any framework for impacting moral and character development is arbitrary unless it is based on an understanding of what character is (Huitt 1998). With this, educators can then formulate curriculum designed to properly develop character. With this definition for character, educational methodologies aimed at character development will now be reviewed. By first covering the definition of character and now the educational methodologies for developing it, the goal of these first two sections of this chapter is to better understand “what” character development is, and then “how” educators have attempted to accomplish it.

Character Education and Development

Scholarly debate and examination on character development extends back to Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* and Socrates' *Meno* and continues in earnest today (Huitt 1998). In a great many works, character development has been used interchangeably with character education and the terms have both meant much the same. Character education is often thought of as the methodology for achieving the desired goal--

character development. Character education is related to the “how,” while character development is the “desired result.” Both terms have been used interchangeably about efforts to improve the virtuous characteristics of one's personality, or character, and dissuade the vices. In general terms, character, good or bad, is considered to be observable in one's conduct or behavior (Wynne and Walberg 1985, 15-18). From this construct, character is different from values in that values are beliefs, knowledge, or ideals whereas character involves action or the activation of those values.

Based upon the definition of character presented in the first section of this chapter, and the idea that character development is the effort to improve the virtuous characteristics of one's character and dissuade the vices, any educational approach for character development should provide a set of educational experiences and self-understandings that would help individuals confront challenges directly and with success (Cunningham 1992). This idea is the underlying concept behind any educational effort in general. Therefore, character development educators have focused on aiding individuals faced with moral dilemmas to make values-based decisions and to consistently act on those decisions, believing this the best approach to positively develop character (Cunningham 1992).

Moral educators are sometimes generalized into two broad groupings based upon their understanding of how best to affect an individual's moral behavior (Power 1997). These two groups are referred to as “traditional moral educators” and “developmental moral educators.” Traditional moral educators have historically focused on developing an individual's values in order to develop the character as a whole. Among these educational approaches are the values clarification, inculcation, and analysis

methodologies for character development. These approaches emphasize the role of habit, modeling, direct instruction, and authority in the formation of character. In contrast to this, moral development educators believe that character development occurs in concert with an individual's cognitive development and focus their efforts on aiding individuals in their process for arriving at values-based decisions. Their efforts have been historically focused on improving moral reasoning and decision-making skills in their approach to build character. In other words, they try to assist individuals in the processes of decision-making, not in the specific choice made by the individual.

In addition to these two broad categories of educational methodologies, there is also a new approach evolving called action learning. This approach focuses on placing individuals in situations that force them to take action in situations, both in and out of the classroom. Educators emphasizing this approach believe that other character development approaches focus too much on moral judgment and too little on moral behavior. This approach is designed to be most effective when used in concert with one of the before mentioned methodologies to link educational efforts focusing on the moral reasoning component of character with moral behavior. The disagreement between educators advocating one methodology over the other illustrates that disputes about character education usually reflect the disagreements about the selection of educational methodologies more so than about their desired outcomes (Cunningham 1992).

There have been a variety of approaches to character education and development, both traditional and developmental. What follows is a review of some of the major educational methodologies aimed at character development.

Values Clarification

The values clarification approach of character development is premised on the idea that no values or character traits are more valid than others (Huitt 1997). This approach takes a “values neutral” stance and attempts to provide opportunities for students to clarify and defend their own values without making recommendations or advocating particular viewpoints (Huitt 1998). The central focus is on helping students use both rational thinking and emotional awareness to examine personal behavior patterns and to clarify and actualize their values. From this perspective, the individual, if he or she is allowed the opportunity to truly be himself or herself and in so doing choose freely, makes choices and decisions affected by the internal processes of willing, feeling, thinking, and intending. It is assumed that through self-awareness, the person enters situations already pointed or set in certain directions. As the individual develops, it is believed that the making of choices will more often be based on conscious, self-determined thought and feeling. This approach advocates that the making of choices, as a truly free person, which can be confirmed or denied in experience, and is a preliminary and fundamental step in the creation of values (Moustakas 1966). It emphasizes reasoning about morals and values to the exclusion of any sort of behavioral training. It holds as one of its assumptions that since individuals develop values based on the lessons learned in the totality of their life experiences, that educational attempts to alter these values would be unsuccessful unless they encompassed the majority of an individual's life. In this educational approach, the teacher should assist the individual to develop his or her internal processes, thereby allowing them, rather than external factors, to be the prime determinants of their behavior.

Among the methods used in the values clarification approach are group discussions, hypothetical or real dilemmas, rank orders, and forced choices. A vital component is a leader or teacher who does not attempt to influence the selection of values. Values clarification assumes that the valuing process is internal and relative and is therefore individualistic rather than a social process. Values clarification then represents the result of a relativistic idea of morality--the teacher's job is merely to help the individual discover what their values in fact are, not to attempt to change those values.

One of the major criticisms of this approach is that certain values or character traits tend to be more likely to lead to socially desired outcomes. It therefore stands to reason that when educators, organizations, and communities have developed a consensus about the worth of certain values, it seems entirely appropriate to teach those values (Huitt 1997).

William Kilpatrick stated that the problem with this approach is "a value is essentially what you like or love to do" (Kilpatrick 1992). He demonstrated the problem by using an incident from Thomas Lickona's *Educating For Character* in which an eighth grade teacher used a values clarification strategy titled "Twenty Things You Love To Do" with a low-achieving class, only to find that the four most popular activities were "sex, drugs, drinking, and skipping school." Values clarification gave the teacher no way of persuading the students to act otherwise (Mulkey 1997, 35-37).

This educational approach and its proponents illustrate that their methodology for character development is based on inherent differences in understandings of how character is formed and not necessarily on the desired outcome. Proponents believe that

by using this approach, the outcome will be an individual that acts in concert with what he already “knows” to be ethical, not what external sources have told him is ethical.

Inculcation

Most educators that advocate the inculcation approach see values as socially or culturally accepted standards or rules of behavior (Huitt 1997). This is an excellent example of how slightly different understandings of what character is, specifically the component of values, and how it is developed affects the methodology used in attempting to develop it. From this approach, the act of making values-based decisions is considered a process of the individual identifying with and accepting the standards or norms of the important individuals and institutions within their society. The individual “incorporates” these values into his or her own value system. These educators take a view of human nature in which the individual is treated, during the inculcation process, as a reactor rather than as an initiator. Advocates for the inculcation approach argue the notion that certain values are universal and absolute. They believe that the needs and goals of society transcend and even define the needs of the individual. However, advocates who consider an individual to be a free participant in society tend to inculcate values as well, especially values such as freedom, human dignity, and justice. Indeed, advocates for both socially-derived values and individualistic-derived values would argue the idea that certain values are universal and absolute. The source of these values, however, is often open to debate. On the one hand, some advocates argue they derive from the natural order of the universe; others believe that values originate in an omnipotent creator (Huitt 1997).

The teaching methods used in the inculcation approach focus heavily on habit, modeling, direct instruction, and authority. The use of both positive and negative reinforcement, manipulating alternatives, and role-playing are all used to aid individuals in developing an increased ability for moral judgment (Huitt 1997).

A major criticism of this approach is the choice of what values the educators advocate. The specific values that are considered universal are either very few and therefore not very specific, to aid in their universal acceptance; or are more comprehensive and therefore more specific, which in turn leads to debate about them, and therefore opens discussion as to how universal they really are. With this approach, two different institutions could theoretically teach two totally separate sets of values. If this were to be true, what does it say to the underlying theory of a universal set of values? Opponents also criticize this approach by suggesting that it is more about indoctrination than true character development. Their contention is that short-term educational efforts using this approach would have little long-term effects on an individual's actions if the values stressed by this approach are not truly and freely accepted by the individual themselves (Huitt 1997).

Analysis

The analysis approach to values education and character development was developed mainly by social science educators and emphasizes rational thinking and reasoning (Huitt 1997). The purpose of the analysis approach is to help students use logical thinking and scientific investigation procedures to deal with value issues (Huitt 1997). Individuals are urged to provide verifiable facts about the correctness or value of the topics or issues under investigation. A major assumption in the analysis approach is

that the act of making values-based decisions is the cognitive process of determining and justifying facts and beliefs derived from those facts. This approach concentrates primarily on social values rather than on personal ones. It is in this concentration that the analysis methodology seeks to use scientific procedures for investigation and focus them on values decisions. Here this approach differs from, yet has elements of, both the values clarification and inculcation approaches previously discussed.

The rationalist (based on reason) and empiricist (based on experience) views of human nature seem to provide the philosophical basis for this approach. Its advocates state that the act of values-based decision making should be conducted under the “total authority of facts and reason” (Scriven 1966, 232).

The teaching methods used by this approach generally center around individual and group study of social value problems and issues, library and field research, and rational class discussions. These are techniques widely used in social studies instruction today (Huitt 1997).

These three approaches are typically considered the methodologies of “traditional moral educators” as they focus on the values and values-based decisions of individuals. They assume that in a situation requiring a values-based decision, there is a “right” and “wrong” solution. “Moral development educators” disagree with this assumption and seek to aid individuals in making decisions based on sound moral principles, regardless of what decision they eventually choose. Here is a review of this educational approach to character development.

Moral Development

The moral development theory differs tremendously from the other approaches of “traditional moral educators” reviewed so far in that it does not focus so much on the values of the individual, whether developed from internal experiences or external influences, but rather focuses on “how” the individual arrives at the values-based decisions. It seeks to develop the “process” of ethical decision making and in so doing, believes the desired outcomes of a person of virtuous character will result. Because this theory is so developed in its understanding of how an individual's character develops, a more in-depth review of this approach is deserved.

Dr. Lawrence Kohlberg was the primary developer of the moral development theory and this approach is often referred to as the Kohlberg Theory. To understand the Kohlberg theory, one must first understand Kohlberg's background and his orientation toward the cognitive development theory of reasoning. A psychologist and educator, Dr. Lawrence Kohlberg was Professor of Psychology and Human Development at the University of Chicago and followed that as Professor of Educational and Social Psychology at Harvard University. While a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, he conceived his theory of moral development based largely on the cognitive development theory.

The cognitive development theory holds that a person's thinking process changes or matures. Jean Piaget, a Swiss educational philosopher and cognitive development theorist, said that one's capacity for all logical reasoning, not just moral reasoning, develops in three sequenced stages: the intuitive, the concrete operational, and the formal operational. The intuitive stage is essentially found only in preschool children. At the

concrete operational stage, the individual can make “logical inferences, classify things, and handle quantitative relations about concrete things.” At the formal operational stage, usually entered into in adolescence, the individual uses abstract reasoning and can “consider all possibilities, consider the relations between elements in a system, form hypotheses, deduce implication from the hypotheses, and test them against reality” (Kohlberg 1985, 31-32).

It is important to note that not all adolescents and adults reach the formal operational (the third) stage. From this, Kohlberg postulated that a person's capacity to reason morally is related to and limited by one's capacity to reason logically and is also developed in sequenced stages (Kohlberg 1985, 31-32).

It seems appropriate to mention here that if one examines this methodology objectively, it bears similarity with its seemingly scientific examination of the facts at hand, to the analysis approach for character development, but with a critical distinction. This approach details the cognitive “development” and focuses more on the process than the result.

The stage sequence theory is an integral part of the overall Kohlberg Theory. According to the stage sequence theory, one's capacity to reason morally develops in sequenced stages. The sequence itself is irreversible with regression to lower stages being rare. The sequence is also invariable in that one cannot skip a stage. Also, each higher stage is more qualitatively complex and actually integrates lower stages of reasoning. Although one's environment can speed up or slow down the developmental process, it cannot change or alter the process itself. Thus, the process is universal and not

culturally oriented. In his initial study, Kohlberg intended to prove that the stage sequence theory also applied in moral development (Lindemann 1986, 2-4).

To confirm his theory of staged moral development, Kohlberg studied his subject's responses to a series of moral dilemmas. His subject population consisted of 150 boys, aged ten, thirteen, and sixteen from the United States, Mexico, Turkey, and Taiwan. To be able to confirm the universality aspect of his theory, he ensured that this cross-cultural group included boys with varied religious and social economic backgrounds. Each of the subjects responded to moral dilemmas involving "classic confrontation between legal and moral obligations, authority and contract, and private and public responsibility" (Weinreich-Haste 1983, 6). Although several dilemmas were used, the most common one, the "Heinz Dilemma" is cited below.

In Europe, a woman was near death from cancer. One drug might save her, a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The druggist was charging \$2,000, ten times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist refused. The husband got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife. (Kohlberg 1984, 393)

After listening to the dilemma, each subject was asked a series of questions such as those below:

1. Would a good husband steal the drug for his wife? Why or why not?
2. What do you think the husband would do if he didn't love his wife?
3. What would his wife think if he did not steal it? What would she want him to do?

4. Would you steal the drug to save your own life? Why or why not?

5. What would you do if you were the husband?

Each response was then scored, not on the basis of the answer given, but rather on the “rationale” given for the answer. The different rationales were then grouped and formed the basis for Kohlberg's levels and stages of moral development. He named and structured his levels and stages as in figure 1.

SOURCE: KOHLBERG, (1963,1981)		
Kohlberg's Levels of Moral Development		
LEVEL	STAGE	CHARACTERISTICS OF STAGE/LEVEL
A Preconventional	Stage 1	PUNISHMENT-OBEDIENCE ORIENTATION
	Stage 2	INSTRUMENTAL RELATIVIST ORIENTATION
B Conventional	Stage 3	INTERPERSONAL CONCORDANCE ORIENTATION
	Stage 4	AUTHORITY AND SOCIAL-ORDER MAINTAINING ORIENTATION
C Postconventional Autonomous, or Principled	Stage 5	SOCIAL-CONTRACT LEGALISTIC ORIENTATION
	Stage 6	UNIVERSAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLE ORIENTATION

Figure 1

Initially, Kohlberg found six stages of moral development grouped at three levels: Level 1--the preconventional level (stages 1 and 2); Level 2--conventional level (stages 3 and 4); Level 3--the postconventional level (stages 5 and 6). In later research, Kohlberg found it very difficult to differentiate between stages 5 and 6 reasoning, and as a result he

combined the two stages. A description of the various levels and stages follow as they result to the first question from the dilemma, "Would a good husband steal the drug for his wife? Why or why not?"

Level 1--The Preconventional Level

At this level, the individual is not yet capable of understanding the conventional rules and mores of society. His reasoning is largely based on external motivations and concerns for his own personal needs. "Right" is whatever those in authority command, as they have the authority to punish and reward. An individual who has only achieved Piaget's concrete operational level of "reasoning" is limited to Level 1 of "moral reasoning."

Stage 1--Heteronomous Morality. At this stage, the rightness and wrongness of an action is determined by the physical consequences of an action. To be right, one must avoid breaking rules backed up by punishment and avoid physical damage to persons and things. One's objective in making moral decisions is to avoid trouble and feelings of guilt. This stage is typically outgrown by age seven.

SHOULD STEAL--If you let your wife die, you will get in trouble. You'll be blamed for not spending the money to save her and there'll be an investigation of you and the druggist for your wife's death.

SHOULD NOT STEAL--You shouldn't steal the drug because you'll be caught and sent to jail if you do. If you do get away, your conscience would bother you thinking how the police would catch up with you at any minute. (Kohlberg 1984, 392-394)

Stage 2--Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange. At this stage, what is right is what best serves the individual and occasionally others. Moral decisions are very pragmatic with ends justifying the means. There are strong emphases on fairness

involving an equal exchange, property, and ownership. This stage could be termed the "morality of the marketplace."

SHOULD STEAL--If you do happen to get caught, you could give the drug back and you wouldn't get much of a sentence. It wouldn't bother you much to serve a little jail term, if you have your wife when you get out.

SHOULD NOT STEAL--He may not get much of a jail term if he steals the drug, but his wife will probably die before he gets out so it won't do him much good. If his wife dies, he shouldn't blame himself, it wasn't his fault she had cancer. (Kohlberg 1984, 392-394)

Level 2--The Conventional Level

At this level, an individual understands and accepts conventional rules and expectations of society just because they are society's rules and expectations. The individual may consider society to be anything from a small group of friends or family to the nation as a whole. A moral decision is right if it contributes to maintaining the social order. Individual considerations are subordinated to the social order. To reason at this level, an individual must have at least a degree of Piaget's formal operational level of logical reasoning. In the United States, most people reach this level at about age 13. Kohlberg's research concluded that the majority of adults morally reason at Level 2.

Stage 3--Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity. At this stage, to be right, one must live up to what those around him expect of him in his role as husband, father, citizen, or other. The need to care for others and share feelings, as well as to show trust, loyalty, and gratitude are important to the stage 3 reasoner as it leads to acceptance and approval of the group.

SHOULD STEAL--No one will think you're bad if you steal the drug but your family will think you're an inhuman husband if you don't. If you let your wife die, you'll never be able to look anybody in the face again.

SHOULD NOT STEAL--It isn't just the druggist who will think you're a criminal, everyone else will too. After you steal it, you'll feel bad thinking how you've

brought dishonor on your family and yourself. You won't be able to face anyone again. (Kohlberg 1984, 392-394)

Stage 4--Social System and Conscience. At this stage, rightness is doing one's duty. Obeying the law is critical to maintaining the social order. One must respect the law rather than merely defer to it. One must also fulfill one's contracts. This is the highest stage reached by the majority of adults.

SHOULD STEAL--If you have any sense of honor, you won't let your wife die because you're afraid to do the only thing that will save her life. You'll always feel guilty that you caused her death if you don't do your duty to her.

SHOULD NOT STEAL--You're desperate and you may not know you're doing wrong when you steal the drug. But you'll know you did wrong after you're punished and sent to jail. You'll always feel guilty for dishonesty and lawbreaking. (Kohlberg 1984, 392-394)

Level 3--The Postconventional Level

At this, the highest level, an individual understands and generally accepts society's rules, however his acceptance is limited by his concept of the principles that underlie society's rules. The individual defines his values primarily in terms of self-chosen principles. This level, if reached at all, is normally reached by the early twenties. To reach this level of moral reasoning, one must have fully attained Piaget's formal operational level of logical reasoning.

Stage 5--Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights. At this stage, reasoning can become quite complex. There is a general need to obey the law because the law is part of the social contract. However, if some rules or laws are seen as unjust or otherwise lacking social utility, they should be changed by a democratic process. Some principles such as life and liberty may also be seen as absolute. Principles must always take precedence over law. The United States Constitution embodies stage 5 reasoning.

SHOULD STEAL--You'd lose other people's respect, not gain it, if you don't steal. If you let your wife die, it would be out of fear, not out of reasoning it out. So you'd lose self-respect and probably the respect of others too. You would have lived up to the outside rule of law but you wouldn't have lived up to your own standards of conscience.

SHOULD NOT STEAL--You would lose your standing and respect in the community and violate the law. You'd lose respect for yourself if you're carried away by emotion and forget the long-range point of view. You would condemn yourself because you would not have lived up to your own conscience and standards of honesty. (Kohlberg 1984, 392-394)

Stage Development

From his initial and follow studies, Kohlberg determined that each person progressed from stage to stage until stabilizing at his final adult stages, usually during his early twenties. Because each stage involved an integration of lower stage reasoning, a person was able to understand reasoning at his own stage and all lower stages. Each person was also able to understand reasoning at one stage higher than his own even though he did not personally accept that reasoning. From the behavioral standpoint, Kohlberg found that while a higher stage of reasoning was a requirement for and a predictor of higher stage behavior, it could not guarantee such behavior (Lindemann 1986, 5-12).

Educators adopting a moral development approach believe that moral thinking develops in stages through the specific sequence previously described. This approach focuses primarily on moral values such as fairness, justice, equity and dignity. Since the fundamental assumption of this approach is that individuals can comprehend one stage above their current primary stage and exposure to the next higher level is essential for enhancing moral development, educators attempt to stimulate students to develop more complex moral reasoning patterns through these sequential stages. The educational

technique most often used to execute this moral development model is to present a hypothetical and factual value dilemma story that is then used in a group discussion. Students are presented with alternative viewpoints within these discussions, which are intended to lead to higher, more developed moral thinking.

Within this character development approach, there is an assumption that values are based on cognitive moral beliefs or concepts. This view would agree with the inculcation assumption that there are universal moral principles, but would contend that values are considered relative to a particular environment or situation and are applied to the cognitive development of the individual (Huitt 1997).

Among the major criticisms of this particular educational methodology for character development is that this approach leads to the idea of “moral relativism.” Since traditional moral educators use an assumption that in most moral dilemmas, there is a “right” and “wrong” solution, the fundamental idea of moral justification for decisions comes in direct conflict to their beliefs. The idea that, as in the Heinz dilemma, one could be morally justified in either stealing the drugs or not stealing the drugs flies in the face of traditional moral educational principles. The idea of moral justification of a decision is in direct contradiction to the idea that there is a “right” and “wrong” thing to do in the situation. This criticism highlights the traditionalists' view that some values, regardless of the situation that an individual finds himself in, are universal, while developmentalists consider values relative to a particular environment or situation.

Action Learning

Action learning is among the newest major approaches to character development and as a result is the least developed and refined of the approaches so far reviewed. It is

derived from a perspective that values-based decision making includes a process of implementation as well as development (Huitt 1997). That is, it is important to move beyond thinking and feeling--to acting. The approach is related to educational efforts to emphasize community-based rather than classroom-based learning experiences. It is designed to work best together with one of the other previously mentioned approaches (Huitt 1998).

Advocates of the action-learning approach stress the need to provide specific opportunities for learners to act on their values. They see valuing primarily as a process of self-actualization in which individuals consider alternatives; choose freely among those alternatives; and prize, affirm, and act on their choices (Huitt 1997). Educators supporting this approach place more emphasis on action taking inside and outside the classroom than is reflected in traditional moral educational approaches or moral developmental approaches.

According to this educational theory, either a traditional moral education approach or a moral development approach would be used initially. Then students would have to put their thoughts and feelings developed in those approaches into action in a variety of social actions. Advocates of the action learning approach believe that this combination of approaches is much more likely to impact the component of character not focused on by the other methodologies, namely moral behavior (Huitt 1998).

Many of the teaching methods for action-learning are to place students in actual moral dilemma situations. One such example is the creation of student-run courts to handle school discipline issues. The major difference in this approach is that action learning does not start from a preconceived notion of moral development. It views the

critical component as not the values education, nor the process at how the individual arrives at those values, but rather on the exercising of values. In this manner it distinguishes itself from the others in that it is focused more on the action of the individual than on his values or valuing process.

Summary

Each of these approaches has its own view of human nature. Each approach then gears its purposes, processes and methods used to develop character based on this viewpoint. Educational proponents of the values clarification, inculcation, and analysis approaches are sometimes generalized as “traditional moral educators.” These approaches focus on the values and values-based decisions of individuals. They assume that in a situation requiring a values-based decision, there is a “right” and “wrong” solution. The traditionalists emphasize the role of habit, modeling, direct instruction, and authority in the formation of character. Proponents of Kohlberg's theory and others like it are generalized as “moral development educators.” These educators disagree with the assumption that decisions can be looked on as black and white, right and wrong, and seek to aid individuals in making decisions based on sound moral principles, regardless of what decision they eventually make. They stress that the conflict imposed by a moral dilemma is that there are competing values involved in the decision and therefore values-based decisions are situational in nature.

Supporters of the action learning approach believe that by being actually placed in moral dilemma situations, an individual will be able to act more consistently with his values and therefore his qualities of both moral judgment and moral behavior will improve. Since action learning focuses on behavior, advocates see this approach having

the greatest impact when used in concert with one of the other educational methodologies that focus on moral reasoning. Their view is that by placing individuals in actual scenarios where they are forced to make values-based decisions and taking action on those decisions, individuals will have the greatest opportunity to positively develop their overall character.

Table 1 shows all of these different approaches and highlights their most important features.

Table 1 Overview of Character Education and Development Approaches		
Approach	Purpose	Methods
Values Clarification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help students become aware of and identify their own values and those of others; • To help students communicate openly and honestly with others about their values; • To help students use both rational thinking and emotional awareness to examine their personal feelings, values, and behavior patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-playing games; • Simulations; • Contrived or real value-laden situations; • In-depth self-analysis exercises; • Sensitivity activities; • Out-of-class activities; • Small group discussions
Inculcation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To instill or internalize certain values in students; • To change the values of students so they more nearly reflect certain desired values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling; • Positive and negative reinforcement; • Manipulating alternatives; • Games and simulations; • Role playing

Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help students use logical thinking and scientific investigation to decide value issues and questions • To help students use rational, analytical processes in interrelating and conceptualizing their values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured rational discussion that demands application of reasons as well as evidence; • Testing principles; • Analyzing analogous cases; • Research and debate
Moral Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help students develop more complex moral reasoning patterns based on a higher set of values; • To urge students to discuss the reasons for their value choices and positions, not merely to share with others, but to foster change in the stages of reasoning of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral dilemma episodes with small-group discussion; • Relatively structured and argumentative without necessarily coming to a "right" answer
Action Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those purposes listed for analysis and values clarification; • To provide students with opportunities for personal and social action based on their values; • To focus more heavily on action than on values education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods listed for analysis and values clarification; • Projects within school and community that force action on based on values; • Skill practice in group organizing and interpersonal relations

Source: Huitt 1998

Educators from all of these differing approaches do not argue about the desired goal of their efforts but instead about the best methodology for reaching it. Even though there is debate as to the most effective educational methodologies to use, most character development educators agree that the overriding goal in character development efforts is

to improve the virtuous characteristics of a student's character--the moral reasoning component--and to assure that those characteristics are consistently observable in their conduct as moral behavior. The greatest possible weakness of established historical efforts for character development has been their focus on moral reasoning without linking it to moral behavior. Only the action-learning approach gears itself to bridge this gap. This linking of moral reasoning to moral behavior is where there is the greatest room for improvement in character development efforts and this is precisely where sports hold their greatest value.

Character Development in Sports

Up to now, this review has looked at what character is and the major educational methodologies for character development in education. Reviewing this material was necessary to provide a framework for the topic of character development in sports. By defining what character is and how educators have gone about developing it by the different educational methodologies, character development efforts in sport can be better examined. What follows is a review of the applicable research findings of sports' effects on character and character development efforts in sports.

As chapter 1 mentioned, origins of the idea of sports participation as a builder of character have existed in the United States for over one-hundred years (Sage 1998, 15-18). But the verification of this assumption has been largely ignored. Part of this is due to the problem of defining character, which leads to difficulty in determining if an individual's character has been developed. Because empirically verifying that sport builds character is so difficult, those who argue in favor of sports participation for developing character are left to relating anecdotes such as how particular athletes

displayed courage, perseverance, or self-discipline in the course of a game or how a team showed dedication and teamwork. But examples can also be shown revealing everyday real-life stories of courage, loyalty, perseverance, and so on, by people who have never participated in sports. So character qualities often attributed to athletes are neither confined to nor particular to them. In fact, even Lord Wellington, the British general who was said to have acquired his skill and values that defeated Napoleon at Waterloo, did not even play sports at Eton (Sage 1998, 15-18). It was found that there were no compulsory, organized games at Eton while he was there and even the most casual cricket or boating contest did not attract his participation (Longford 1969).

Another common form of anecdotal evidence is the personal account of “what sport did for me.” Such testimonials are often made by former athletes who attribute their post-playing achievements to their sport experiences (Sage 1998, 15-18).

Regardless of the form, of course, anecdotal evidence is unacceptable as scientific evidence. Miracle and Rees, two sport studies scholars who have examined the “sports build character” assertion, note that assessing the concept of character development in sports requires more than collecting anecdotes of athletes who believe that sport taught them how to be successful or saved them from a life of drugs (Miracle and Rees 1994, 13).

Sports are seen as a series of ritual events that make real a set of shared beliefs about particular ways of thinking and feeling. Therefore, sports can be seen as cultural blueprints for understanding a society (Miracle and Rees 1994, 13). The idea that sport does indeed transfer values has been empirically shown, but the idea that these are socially desirable values is less substantiated (Miracle and Rees 1994, 13). Behind the

slogan that “sports build character” there tends to be an assumption that school organized sports transmit only universally admired ethical and moral attributes. Some individuals may prosper in their character development from experiences in sport, but others may not. It is certainly true that sports have immense power to shape consciousness, values, and beliefs of athletes (Miracle and Rees 1994, 13). But because of the variable outcomes from participation in sports based on the varying social contexts athletes find themselves in, merely participating in sports can not be concluded to be a vehicle for positive character development (Sage 1998, 15-18). Little thought about the idea of character development in sports participation seems to be connected with the principle that whatever attitudes, values, and beliefs that will be acquired by young athletes will be strongly related to the values, actions, and morality that is displayed, admired, and rewarded in the social environment in which sport participation takes place. Students learn ethical and moral lessons based upon the nature of the experiences they encounter (Sage 1998, 15-18). Sport does provide an opportunity to have positive experiences, but it equally provides opportunities to learn and reinforce negative, or less socially desirable lessons as well.

This is not to say that sports experiences can have no positive effect on the personal and social development of its participants. Indeed, there is convincing, empirically grounded knowledge that salient social experiences are powerful socializers (Sage 1998, 15-18). Participation in sports is an exciting form of human expression. Many find sports a source of great joy, fun, and self-satisfaction; and young athlete's values and beliefs are undoubtedly shaped by their experiences in them. But the exact effects of sport on attitudes, values, and behaviors, in other words the components of

one's character, depend greatly on the social conditions of the sporting experiences and the social contexts in which sports take place--and these vary widely (Sage 1998, 15-18).

Current research supports the contention that sporting experiences provide a prime setting for promoting character development (Gibbons, Ebbeck and Weiss 1995, 247-255). The reason for this could be that they embody the entire process of the actuation of character. That is to say that they provide an opportunity for individuals to examine and develop values, decide on those values, and then act on those values. Sports place individuals in moral and ethical dilemmas on a regular basis, and by examining the choices they present and the decisions and choices individuals make, there exists an outstanding opportunity to educate and develop character in the athletes as they participate in these activities. The key here is that sports provide an excellent setting for character development, but they do not necessarily provide the character development simply by participating in them alone (Sage 1998, 15-18).

Sports participation by itself, that is to say without some form of specific character developmental process distinct from the participation itself, has not proven to promote character development (Sage 1998, 15-18). In their 1994 book *Lessons of the Locker Room: The Myth of School Sports*, the researchers Miracle and Rees agree with this assessment. They conclude: "The consensus of [our] . . . research . . . and the conclusion of other researchers who have reviewed the research in this area, is that there is no evidence to support the claim that sport builds character in high school [sports] or anywhere else" (Miracle and Rees 1994, 96). Indeed, some research conducted actually suggests that sports participation can hinder character development.

In 1986, a dilemmas-based moral development assessment was administered to fifty college students. The group of both men and women included collegiate basketball players and nonathletes. The findings of the assessment found that the nonathletes had significantly more mature moral reasoning than did the basketball players (Beller and Stroll 1994, 94). While moral reasoning does not equate to character (moral reasoning *and* moral behavior), it is a vital component. Positive character development is much less likely if moral reasoning is degraded. Consistent with these findings, other research suggests that contrary to building character, participation in organized sports have actually been detrimental to moral development, a key component of character regardless of how it is defined (Beller and Stroll 1994, 94). Two researchers, J. Beller and Sharon Stoll, set out to analyze high school student athlete's cognitive moral reasoning compared to their nonathletic peers. They collected data on more than 1,300 high school students in the ninth through twelfth grades. Among their findings were: (1) athletes scored lower on moral development than their nonathletic peers, and (2) moral-reasoning scores for athletic populations steadily declined from the ninth grade through the twelfth grade of high school, whereas scores for nonathletes tended to increase (Beller and Stroll 1994, 96).

So with findings that sporting experiences are excellent opportunities for character development and that mere participation in sports can regularly produce negative effects on moral reasoning, researchers attempted to use specific character development strategies within the context of sporting experiences in an attempt to develop participants' moral reasoning and moral behavior. These strategies were grounded in established character development educational methodologies, such as those

reviewed in section two of this chapter. The researchers Brenda Bredemeier and David Shields conducted experiments on students participating in six-weeks of numerous different sports and game activities. They divided the students into groups with some that had character development components, referred to as moral intervention strategies, and some that did not. Their findings concluded that the students that took part in activities that did have moral intervention strategies improved in moral reasoning skills significantly, while those in the control group consisting of no strategy, just participation alone, did not improve (Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, and Shewchuck 1986, 212-220).

The intervention strategies used included a mixture of approaches based in both “traditional moral educational theory” and “moral developmental theory.” These approaches for character development were termed “social learning” and “structural-developmental teaching” approaches. Social learning proponents define moral development as the extent to which individuals' behaviors conform to social convention or norms (Weiss and Bredemeier 1990, 331-378). Structural-developmental proponents on the other hand define moral development as an individual's tendency to behave in accordance with one's most mature moral reasoning patterns (Weiss and Bredemeier 1990, 331-378). The processes by which individual's develop morally, according to social learning educators, are modeling and reinforcement, whereas structural developmentalists implicate experiencing dilemmas or conflicts, discussing the dilemmas with all involved individuals, and resolving conflicts through mutual agreement or “moral balances” (Gibbons, Ebbeck, and Weiss 1995, 247-255). These moral intervention strategies used were based upon established educational methodologies for developing character. The social learning intervention strategies are founded in traditional moral

educational theories, while the structural development intervention strategies are founded in moral development educational theories.

The focus of this research was not to determine the effectiveness of one approach versus the other, but to determine the effectiveness of moral intervention strategies imbedded within sports programs to develop character. These results were then compared to the effectiveness of sports with no moral intervention strategy to develop character. The results of their experiments indicated significant increases in sportsmanlike behavior, perceptions of sportsmanship, and moral reasoning in all groups having the moral intervention strategies (Gibbons, Ebbeck, and Weiss 1995, 247-255). Just as significant were their findings that there was no increase in sportsmanship behavior, perceptions of sportsmanship, and moral reasoning in the control group that did not have any moral intervention strategy (Gibbons, Ebbeck, and Weiss 1995, 247-255). Their studies strongly suggested that in order to positively affect character, specific character development methodologies need to be used, and without them, sport is not effective at character development.

In a study designed to examine the effects of three moral intervention strategies, the effectiveness at intervention strategies to affect positive change in behavior was further supported (Giebink and McKenzie 1985, 167-177). Two researchers, Patricia Giebink and Thomas McKenzie found that the three intervention strategies of instruction and praise, modeling, and a point system were found to be effective at increasing the occurrence of sportsmanlike (positive) behavior and reducing the occurrence of unsportsmanlike (negative) behavior as compared to no intervention strategy present in the sporting activities. Further, they found that of these three, the point system, being

preceded by the instructions and praise, and modeling strategies, was found to be the most effective at affecting these outcomes (Giebink and McKenzie 1985, 167-177).

What sport makes possible that distinguishes it as a character development tool is that it actually places students in moral dilemmas, as opposed to only discussing them. This forces them to not only make decisions but to *act* on those decisions. It is this key difference that makes sport such a valuable activity (Sage 1998, 15-18). It incorporates all of the elements of character: values, decision-making, and the actuation of those decisions, and places all of them into a single learning opportunity. But the most important aspect of this is that positive moral behavior outcomes do not necessarily come about in sport unless specific character education methodologies are utilized in the process (Sage 1998, 15-18).

Conclusion

This chapter has covered three aspects of character in order to provide a framework to evaluate whether the United States Air Force Academy's intramural sports program supports the Academy's mission of character development. It found a common definition for character, reviewed the major established educational methodologies for character development, and of greatest significance to this study, presented an overview of recent research findings concerning character development in sports.

What was found is that there are different understandings about the nature of what character is. It is a very difficult phenomenon to describe. But many of the different definitions all have two common components. In its ethical context, character is knowing or having a virtuous ideal, belief, or value--thought of as moral reasoning, and consistently acting in accordance with this understanding--defined as moral behavior.

Historically, established educational approaches at developing character have been focused on classroom learning environments. The primary focus of these approaches has been to attempt to develop an individual's moral reasoning capabilities with the belief that this would transfer into a more consistent occurrence of moral behavior. The methodologies for the major educational approaches at character development are categorized into two broad groups. These two groups are referred to as traditional moral educational approaches and moral development educational approaches. Traditional moral educators have focused on developing an individual's values in order to develop the character as a whole. Among these educational approaches are the values clarification, inculcation, and analysis methodologies for character development. These approaches emphasize the role of habit, modeling, direct instruction, and authority in the formation of character. In contrast to this, moral development educators believe that character development occurs in concert with an individual's cognitive development and focus their efforts on aiding individuals in their process for arriving at values-based decisions. Their efforts have been focused on improving moral reasoning and decision making skills. In other words, they try to assist individuals in the processes of decision making, not in the decision itself. This disagreement illustrates that disputes about character education usually reflect the disagreements about educational methodologies more so than about their desired outcomes.

Finally, the idea that "sport builds character" was reviewed. This notion has been accepted without any empirical evidence to support it. Research findings have shown that participation in sports does not necessarily build character. Empirical evidence has shown that sports provide an excellent "setting" for character development, but they do

not reliably and consistently provide character development simply by participating in them alone. The outcome of sports participation on character is heavily dependent on the context of the environment in which it is experienced. In fact, the effect of sports participation have in many cases been shown to hinder moral reasoning development and actually degrade it as compared to those individuals who do not participate in sports at all. But sports have a unique and exceptional potential to develop character in its participants based on their ability to place participants in moral dilemmas, which force them to make decisions and act on their decisions. Researchers have conducted studies that have shown that if specific moral intervention strategies are incorporated into sporting experiences, moral reasoning--a key component of character, can be positively affected. Of equal importance is that this same research has also shown that if no moral intervention strategy is used, development of character is not only uncertain, but moral reasoning is often degraded by sports participation.

From this review of available literature on character, character development methodologies, and research of character development in sports, this study will now examine the United States Air Force Academy's intramural sports program to determine if it supports the Academy's mission of character development.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The problem in this study is to attempt to determine if the intramural program supports the Academy's mission of character development. By providing a background of research dealing with the components and characteristics of character, character development methodologies in education, and the findings of applicable research concerning character development in sports, this study has provided a working framework for an understanding of character development in sports in the hopes of finding a solution to the research problem. The goal of the remaining portions of this study is to compare this information already reviewed about character development in sports to the goals and methodologies of the Academy's intramural sports program in an attempt to determine the effectiveness of the program at character development.

The athletic department overall is divided into four areas: intercollegiate athletics, intramurals, physical education and physical fitness. With very few exceptions and unless they are an intercollegiate athlete or a club-sport member, every cadet at the Academy participates in intramural sports. The intramural sports program consists of two seasons of sporting activities in the fall and the spring. These are:

Fall Intramurals

Cross Country
Soccer
Team Handball
Tennis
Flickerball
Boxing
Flag Football

Spring Intramurals

Volleyball
Water Polo
Ultimate Frisbee
Racquetball
Wallyball
Rugby

They include teams that participate in each of the sports from each of the cadet squadrons. The manning for all teams, coaches, and referees is comprised entirely of cadets. Officers assigned to the athletic department oversee the competitions in a supervisory capacity (U.S. Air Force Academy 2000).

Design

Beyond a basic description of the intramural program, the objectives, specific desired outcomes, and methods used to obtain those outcomes will need to be examined in order to answer the primary research question. Therefore the basic design of this study is to compare the intramural program's goals and methodologies for accomplishing those goals to the information reviewed in chapter 2. By examining these components of the program as they relate to character development, this study will attempt to draw conclusions as to the effectiveness of the program's process at character development by comparative analysis to the available research findings.

Method

Information regarding the Academy's intramural program was collected from a number of sources. These were:

1. The Academy website;
2. The Academy's instructions (regulations) concerning its intramural program;
3. A questionnaire sent to the staff of the Academy's athletic department; and
4. A telephone interview with the Intramural Division Chief.

The first of these sources was the United States Air Force Academy's official website available on the internet. This site has information on all aspects of the

Academy, including its athletic program. Information is available on the athletic department as a whole, as well as the intramural program.

The second source used were the regulatory documents of the Air Force Academy. These included:

1. Mission Directive 29, an Academy publication that outlines the mission and responsibilities of the Academy's athletic department;
2. Air Force Cadet Wing Instruction (AFCWI) 34-101, an Academy document that prescribes the objectives and procedures to be followed in the USAFA Intramural Sports Program; and
3. Athletic Department Operating Instruction (AHOI) 537-1, an Academy document that provides information concerning the organization, objectives, philosophy and curriculum of the Directorate of Athletic Programs.

The third source of information regarding the intramural program used for this analysis was a questionnaire developed to address the intramural program's goals and methodology for character development. For this questionnaire, seven subordinate questions were developed. They were:

1. What are the goals/desired outcomes of the intramural sports program?
2. Is character development a specific goal/desired outcome of the intramural sports program?
3. If not, why?
4. If yes, what specifically, concerning character, does the intramural sports program attempt to accomplish in its cadet participants?

5. How does the intramural program specifically attempt to develop character in its participants?

6. Does the intramural program have any specific components or methodologies for attempting to develop character in its participants?

7. Does the athletic department attempt to assess the character development of the cadets as a result of their participation in intramurals?

These subordinate questions were developed to supplement the official information available and directly ask the athletic department staff about the goals and methodologies for character development in the intramural program. They were designed to ask what the intramural program is specifically attempting to accomplish regarding character development and then, specifically how it attempts to accomplish it. The Academy's goals, assumptions, and expectations of the program fundamentally affect the operation and focus of the program and these questions attempt to determine what these are.

These questions were forwarded to the Academy's athletic department, specifically the Director of Athletic Programs of the Athletic Department to be answered. He in turn staffed them to the Intramural Division Chief where they were answered in coordination with the Director of Athletic Programs and returned to the author.

The fourth and final source of information used for comparative analysis of the intramural program was a telephone interview conducted by the author with the Intramural Division Chief after the questionnaire was answered and returned. This provided an opportunity to ensure the accuracy of the responses and allow elaboration on particular points.

Summary

The purpose of this examination was to determine the Academy's goals, assumptions, and methods for accomplishing character development in the intramural program. The methodology of this study was to collect information on the goals and methodologies of the Academy's intramural program as they concern character development. It collected information from the Academy's website, official publications, a prepared questionnaire sent to the Academy, and a telephone interview with the Intramural Division Chief. With this, the information collected was compared to the research findings on character development in sports that was reviewed in chapter two. This comparison will be focused on determining if the process used in the Academy's intramural sports program for character development is effective according to these research findings, or if contradictions exist between this process and what researcher's studies have found to be most effective.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study's primary research question is to determine whether the United States Air Force Academy's intramural sports program supports the Academy's mission of character development. In chapter 3, a method for comparing the information concerning character development in sports presented in chapter 2 and the information available about the Academy's intramural sports program was outlined. Four different sources of information were identified to determine the objectives and evaluate the methods for achieving these objectives of the intramural program concerning character development. These sources were the Academy's website, the official publications of the Academy concerning the intramural program, a questionnaire composed of seven questions developed for this study concerning the program's goals and methods, and a telephone interview with the Intramural Division Chief at the Academy. All the information from these sources was gathered to determine the answers to three main questions about the program:

1. Is character development an objective of the Academy's intramural program?
2. How does the intramural program specifically attempt to achieve character development?
3. Do the intramural sporting competitions have any specific components or methodologies for attempting to develop character?

Objectives of the Intramural Program

All four sources had information that related to the goals and objectives of the intramural program. According to the Air Force Academy Athletic Department's web page on the mission of the athletic department, "the athletic program (of the athletic department) . . . teaches leadership in a competitive environment and builds character" (United States Air Force Academy 2000). On the intramural program's web page, the goal of the intramural program is said to be the emphasis of team before self. "The competition is centered around the cadet squadron, with squadron success, not individual accomplishment as the ultimate goal" (United States Air Force Academy 2000). It does not mention character development as a goal or objective of the program. This was the extent of the information taken from the Academy's website.

Next, the official publications of the Academy were reviewed. These publications were:

1. Mission Directive 29, an Academy publication that outlines the mission and responsibilities of the Directorate of Athletics, the Academy's athletic department;
2. Air Force Cadet Wing Instruction (AFCWI) 34-101, an Academy document that prescribes the objectives and procedures to be followed in the USAFA Intramural Sports Program; and
3. Athletic Department Operating Instruction (AHOI) 537-1, an Academy document that provides information concerning the organization, objectives, philosophy and curriculum of the Directorate of Athletic Programs

Either the entire documents or the portions of them that relate to the goals and objectives of the intramural program are located in appendixes A, B, and C. A summary

of their guidance concerning the intramural program and whether it is designed to develop character is provided in table 2.

Table 2 According To These Publications, Is Character Development A Goal Of The Intramural Program		
PUBLICATION	YES	NO
Mission Directive 29		X
AFCWI 34-101	X	
AHOI 537-1	X	

Mission Directive 29 prescribes the mission, organization, and responsibilities of the Athletic Department. It specifies that the department's mission is to provide experiences that foster leadership, develop programs that mentally and physically challenge cadets, prepare and motivate them to a lifetime of service through physical education and fitness training and testing, and others; but it does not state that any of the programs that the Athletic Department is tasked to establish are designed to develop character (United States Air Force Academy 2000).

Air Force Cadet Wing Instruction (AFCWI) 34-101 says two things specifically about character development. In the heading of the instruction it states, "The Department of Athletics (AH) will establish a program to develop the character . . . required of an Air Force officer through the intramural program" (appendix B). But the instruction later goes on to state that the intramural program exists to develop sportsmanship. This specific trait of character is the only reason listed for the existence of the program as it

relates to character development. Therefore, the instruction mandates the establishment of an intramural program that develops character, but the only stated reason for the intramural program in the instruction (as it relates to character development) is for the development of sportsmanship, no other component of character. This will be addressed later in chapter 5.

The Athletic Department Operating Instruction AHOI 537-1 provides a source of information concerning the organization, objectives, philosophy and curriculum of the Directorate of Athletic Programs (AHP) (appendix C). In chapter 3 of the operating instruction which deals specifically with the intramural program, it states that the program exists, "To develop in each cadet leadership and character traits that foster teamwork, discipline, perseverance, self confidence, emotional control, physical courage, an ability to overcome adversity and a highly competitive attitude." In this instruction it states that the program exists to develop character traits that lead to specific desired outcomes. What differs here is that AFCWI 34-101 lists a single character trait to be developed--sportsmanship, but in AHOI 537-1, it lists the outcomes that the intramural program exists to develop. These outcomes though are not the same as the eight Character Development Outcomes as established by the Character Development Commission. This will also be discussed later in chapter 5. This was all the information gathered from the Academy's official publications.

The third source of information on the goals of the intramural program was a questionnaire sent to the staff of the athletic department (appendix D). In listing the goals of the intramural program, the character trait of sportsmanship was the only element of character that was cited as a goal. But when asked directly if character development is a

goal of the program, the answer was a definitive “absolutely.” When the methodology for accomplishing the character development was asked, the athletic department stated that character development occurred by placing cadets in competitive situations in the sporting events. The department stated that they were not sure, but that these sporting competitions had no specific component or methodology for developing character in the cadets other than the competitions themselves.

Finally, the author conducted a telephone interview with the Intramural Division Chief. In the interview, he reiterated that a major goal of the intramural program was to develop character in the cadets and said that the specification of the trait of sportsmanship was to be taken as character in general. He said that the listing of sportsmanship was an attempt to specify what about character the intramural program was trying to develop (Nelson 2000). From these sources, it appears clear that a specific goal of the intramural program is the development of character in the cadets.

How Does the Intramural Program Attempt to Develop Character

The methods used in the intramural sports program to accomplish character development were only discussed in the responses to the questionnaire and in the telephone interview. Here, this study attempted to determine specifically how the Academy attempts to accomplish character development in the intramural program.

In both the responses to the questionnaire and the telephone interview, the assumption that character development occurs from participation in sporting competitions was articulated. The responses to the questionnaire were elaborated on in the telephone interview. According to the athletic department staff in the questionnaire and the

Intramural Division Chief in the telephone interview, the intramural sports program has no specific component such as a moral intervention strategy to specifically focus on positively developing the character of the cadets who participate in the intramural program. Furthermore, as stated by the Athletic Department in the questionnaire, the Academy realizes that the intramural program develops habits that may have either positive or negative effects on a cadet's character, but has no plans to change it. This will be discussed in chapter 5.

Summary

From the information available from all four sources, all three questions about the intramural program's objectives and methods are answered. A stated goal of the intramural program is to not only develop leadership and physical skills, but to develop character as well. The program attempts to accomplish character development by having the cadets participate in sporting competitions. In addition, these sporting competitions have no specific components or methodologies to positively develop character.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study examines of the idea that “sports build character” and specifically sets out to determine whether the United States Air Force Academy's intramural sports program supports the Academy's mission of character development. Information was provided in chapter 2 to provide a framework for dealing with the topic of character development in sports. The chapter started out by defining character. In an ethical context, character is knowing or having a virtuous ideal, belief, or value--thought of as moral reasoning, and consistently acting in accordance with this understanding--defined as moral behavior. Educational approaches to character development were reviewed to see how character development is addressed in non athletic education. These efforts were the character development approaches of values clarification, inculcation, analysis, moral development, and action learning. Finally, the effects of sports participation on character development were reviewed as well as efforts to specifically use sports to develop character. Sports were found to be excellent settings for individuals to have positive experiences and learn. But unless specific attempts are made to guide these experiences to teach desired lessons, the lessons learned may either promote moral development or may degrade it. Sports were found to have a tremendous potential for character development because they embody the full actuation of character--both knowing and doing. But unless specific character development components, referred to as moral intervention strategies, were present in the sporting activities, participation in sports alone

was not an effective method to consistently and effectively develop character and can in many instances actually hinder moral reasoning development.

In chapter 3, the Academy's intramural sports program was briefly outlined and the method for comparing the information covered in chapter 2 to the intramural program was determined. The program was analyzed by reviewing information on the Academy's website, reviewing the Academy's instructions outlining and governing the intramural program, reviewing the athletic department staff's answers to a questionnaire concerning the character development methodology in the intramural program, and a telephone interview with the Intramural Division Chief at the Academy.

Through the process developed in chapter 3, chapter 4 analyzed the information to determine if character development was indeed a goal of the intramural program and if so, specifically how the Academy attempts to accomplish it.

Summary of Results

The conclusion reached by this study is that the intramural sports program at the United States Air Force Academy does not support the Academy's mission of character development. This conclusion is supported by the following four findings.

The first finding is that there is no empirical data to evaluate the intramural sports program's effect on character development. After searching the available sources to include the Academy's Center for Character Development, Institutional Research and Assessment Division, and Athletic Department, as well as non-Academy academic and research locations, no empirical data on the Academy's intramural program was found.

The second finding is that no definitive conclusions can be drawn as to the intramural sports program's effectiveness at character development. Because of the lack

of any empirical data, the effectiveness of the program at character development cannot be definitively determined. Therefore, without this data, the process and methodology used to accomplish character development in the intramural sports program was reviewed. This methodology review was the central focus of this study.

The third finding is that the available research literature strongly supports the conclusion that with no component that specifically focuses on character development such as a moral intervention strategy, the intramural sports program at the United States Air Force Academy is not effective at consistently and reliably developing character in its participants.

The fourth and final finding is that while character development is a mission of the Academy, it is not consistently incorporated into the intramural sports program. According to the Academy's mission statement, a primary mission of the Academy is character development. Yet the intent of the Academy to accomplish character development through the intramural sports program is not consistently articulated by the Academy in its official directives and instructions.

Discussion

The first two findings are interrelated. There have been no empirical studies of character development in the Academy's intramural sports program. Therefore without any data, the program's effectiveness at character development cannot be quantitatively determined. This is not because it is not possible. While there currently is not any academically recognized method for measuring character, there are several measuring procedures for evaluating moral reasoning--a key component of character. Several different types of written tests can evaluate this. In addition to this, behaviors can be

observed and evaluated as either sportsmanlike or unsportsmanlike. Trends can then be reviewed to determine if participation in the intramural sports program has any effect on the occurrences of these behaviors. This was done by the researchers Giebink and McKenzie in their evaluation of differing moral intervention strategies effects in physical education (Giebink and McKenzie 1985, 167-177). So empirical research conducted to measure both moral reasoning and specific types of behavior is possible, it just does not exist on the Academy's intramural sports program. Therefore, without the ability to review data measuring the effects of the intramural program on character, this study focused on reviewing the process used by the Academy in the intramural program for character development. The process used by the Academy has been evaluated elsewhere in clinical research studies. These research findings were reviewed in chapter 2.

Finding three is at the heart of this study. The analysis of the information provided in chapter 4 determined that character development was indeed a goal of the intramural sports program at the Air Force Academy. It further determined that the Academy attempts to accomplish character development in its intramural program by participation in the sporting competitions alone. That is to say that there are no specific character development components, methodologies, or moral intervention strategies present in the sporting competitions that attempt to foster character development. This has been shown to be an ineffective methodology for consistently and reliably developing character and in some cases has hindered moral development.

Whether the Academy assumes that participation in the intramural sporting competitions will positively develop character in the cadets or accepts that these competitions may have both positive and negative affects on moral development and has

no plan to alter them is unclear. The Academy most likely assumes character development happens as a result of participation in sporting competitions. What is most intriguing is that at the same time, some faculty and staff at the Academy recognize that the intramural sporting competitions might have either a positive or a negative effect on character (Appendix D), but do not plan on making changes to it. If the Academy assumes that sports alone build character, this idea has been shown to be false (Beller and Stoll 1994, 94; Bredemeier et al. 1986, 212-220; Gibbons et al. 1995, 247-255; Sage 1998, 15-18; and Miracle and Rees 1994, 13). If on the other hand, they realize that it is not an effective methodology for consistently accomplishing character development, then this study hopes to give them the tools to help better accomplish this mission.

The focus of this study was to review the affects of sports and moral intervention strategies in sports on character development. But in examining the official publications and instructions of the Air Force Academy, this study found a lack of consistency in the purpose of the athletic programs of the Directorate of Athletics as they relate to character development. Because of this, finding four is that while character development is a mission of the Academy, it is not consistently incorporated into the intramural sports program.

The fact that there was no data to quantitatively evaluate the intramural program forced the review of the process used for character development to determine the program's effectiveness. In other words, since the results of the program could not be measured, this study looked at the methodology used to produce those results. In finding three, the methodology used in the intramural program for character development was found to be ineffective. But in reviewing the process used by the Academy for character

development in the intramural program, the Academy's intentions for the intramural program were found to be inconsistent. The fact that the intramural sports program exists to, among other things, develop character is inconsistently articulated in the Academy's directives and instructions. This inconsistency in the intentions of the Academy for the intramural program to develop character can negatively affect the process. The Academy does not consistently articulate that the intramural program exists to develop character, therefore the intramural program has the potential to be focused on accomplishing other goals instead of character development.

The web page on the intramural program says that the purpose of the program is place the team ahead of the individual. This is not supported by any documentation. The purpose of "placing the team ahead of the individual" is not mentioned in any of the official mission statements, directives, or instructions. But even these publications are inconsistent as to what the purpose of the intramural program is.

Mission Directive (MD) 29 says that the Directorate of Athletics will establish activities for a number of reasons (appendix A). But it does not specify character development as a reason for any of these activities. Character development is a major component of the Academy's mission and yet it is omitted from the Mission Directive of the Athletic Department. Even though leadership is listed, nowhere in the directive is "character development" listed as a reason for the existence of any programs the department is directed to establish. Whatever the reason for this omission, character development should be included as a reason for establishing athletic programs in MD 29.

In AFCWI 34-101, the instruction mandates that the intramural program will be established for the purpose of character development, among others (appendix B). But in

the first paragraph, the only listed reason for the existence of the intramural program as it concerns character is to develop sportsmanship. But the affect of sports on character is too broad to narrow down to a single trait. In addition, attempting to list specific traits does not support the efforts of the Academy's Character Development Commission. What would better support their strategy is to either list "to develop character" as a reason for the intramural program, or list which of the eight Character Development Outcomes the intramural program supports achieving. The problem with listing specific character traits is exacerbated when one compares AFCWI 34-101 and AHOI 537-1. The Athletic Department's Operating Instruction, AHOI 537-1 lists outcomes that character traits the program is supposed to develop are designed to help produce. These outcomes, however, are not the Character Development Outcomes developed by the Character Development Commission. In addition, sportsmanship (listed in AFCWI 34-101) is not mentioned at all.

Because character has such a broad and in-depth meaning, it would be better to specify the goals of the intramural program as "to develop character" or specify which of the eight Character Development Outcomes the program supports achieving. To best support the Academy's strategic plan, this would be reiterated in all the websites, mission statements, directives, and instructions.

Character development is a difficult concept to operationalize. With so much confusion concerning what it is and how to accomplish it, it is no wonder that the process for accomplishing character development is often misunderstood. But it is the mission of the Air Force Academy and institutions like it to gain a better understanding of character development and gear their processes to best accomplish it.

The Air Force Academy has the potential to be much more effective in its character development efforts in athletics. To do this, the Academy would need to focus on two things. First, USAFA would better define and more consistently articulate what the goals of the athletic programs are. Second, it would then determine the most effective methods for accomplishing these goals. If one of the primary goals of a specific athletic program is character development, it needs to be specified as such and then, methods need to be developed to best accomplish this goal.

Efforts to develop character would best support the Academy's strategic plan if they aided in affecting one or more of the eight Character Development Outcomes. Character, as was discussed in chapter 2, is a broad and multi-faceted component of human behavior. It was defined to be, in its ethical context, moral reasoning and moral behavior. Because "character" has such an in-depth meaning comprising both knowledge and action, trying to simplify it to a specific trait such as "sportsmanship" can marginalize overall efforts at developing it. There is a compelling argument that espouses distinguishing what exactly about "character development" an activity is trying to accomplish. But the Academy's Character Development Commission has already done this. It did not attempt to develop a list of individual character traits, but instead established its eight Character Development Outcomes.

The Academy's mission is to instill and develop knowledge, leadership, and character (United States Air Force Academy 1999, 21). Therefore, all other objectives of any part of the Academy should be secondary to these. If the mission statements of divisions of the Academy consistently listed their goals prioritized to support the overall mission of the Academy, then character development should be among the very highest

priorities of all activities in the athletic department. But the different mission statements of the Academy, from the Academy's overall mission down to the individual objectives of the intramural program, do not consistently prioritize its mission requirements equally.

Recommendations

A character development program, to be viable, needs consistent support in Academy information sources, publications, and mission statements. This concept is called “nesting.” It assures all subordinate efforts of an organization support the accomplishment of the higher organization's goals. Specifically, character development needs to be listed in the Academy's website, its subordinate mission directives and statements, and instructions dealing with sporting competitions as a fundamental objective and purpose for existence.

This study recommends that Mission Directive 29 be amended to include “character development” as a fundamental reason for establishing athletic programs for the Directorate of Athletics. AFCWI 537-1 should list “character development” as one of the primary reasons for the existence of the intramural sports program. Finally, AHOI 537-1 should specify “character development” as an objective of the program and specifically list which Character Development Outcomes it attempts to aid in achieving.

Even more important than these actions, the Academy should determine how it can best provide a process that focuses on achieving character development in its intramural program without fundamentally altering the program. By doing this, the intramural program's effectiveness at developing character could be vastly improved while the other positive affects of the program can be maintained. Such an approach at

character development in intramural sports is already in place at another similar institution and can be readily implemented.

The United States Military Academy at West Point has much the same mission as the Air Force Academy and has successfully implemented a moral intervention strategy into its intramural sports program. Dr. Lawrence Butler is the Director of Competitive Sports at West Point and recently published an article in the February 2000 issue of the *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance* outlining their efforts at character development in their intramural program. What they have done is to award teams points in intramural competitions for "fair play and sportsmanship" (Butler 2000, 32-35). In a competition, teams are awarded two, five, or ten points towards rankings depending on whether they lose, tie, or win respectably. In many institutions such as the Air Force Academy, this practice of rewarding winning is the only outcome recognized and rewarded by the overall institution. The organizational emphasis is placed merely on "winning the game," not on "how the game is played." But West Point now also awards points to teams according to how they have conducted themselves during the competition, specifically focusing on the demonstration of "fair play and sportsmanship" during the competitions. Depending upon the judgment of the official, another cadet, in addition to the points given for losing, tying, and winning, the teams are also given two, five, or ten points for their demonstrated fair play and sportsmanship during the competition. By awarding these points and by making them as valuable as the ones awarded for winning, the institution has articulated to the cadets that it not only values winning the game, but that it equally values how it is played as well.

By placing this moral intervention strategy into its intramural program, West Point has linked its other institutional character development efforts to actions and behaviors demonstrated in the sporting competitions. In this way, an educational approach linking the “moral reasoning” component of character to the “moral behavior” component is realized.

There are several aspects that make this an attractive approach to improve the character development of the intramural program. First, as mentioned in chapter 2, a point system intervention strategy was found to be the most effective method as compared to instruction and praise, and modeling at increasing sportsmanlike behavior and decreasing unsportsmanlike behavior in sporting competitions (Giebink and McKenzie 1985, 167-177). Another reason that this character development strategy is so attractive is its simplicity. West Point gives training to both the intramural officials and coaches on what the goals, objectives and procedures of the program are, but other than that, the competitions are relatively unchanged. Watching the competitions, one may not notice any difference. What an observer might notice is the official giving each team feedback during the competition, at halftime, and then announcing his final decision on points awarded and why at the end of the game. The points awarded for fair play and sportsmanship are final and not subject to appeal. Reasons for low points might be for fighting, “trash talk,” or any other undesirable behaviors that conflict with the values of the institution. Reasons for high points might be for demonstrating a strong desire to win with aggressive play, while treating the opponents and the officials with respect and civility (Butler 2000, 32-35). Even with these additional points for fair play and

sportsmanship, the intramural program continues to foster competitiveness and presents leadership opportunities to cadets involved in them as it did before.

Another positive aspect of this approach is that it gives the Academy the ability to assess the intramural program's effect on undesirable behavior in intramural competitions. By examining the points awarded for fair play and sportsmanship, trends might better be identified that would allow the Academy to focus on positive character development efforts for the cadets.

The presence of this character development strategy better focuses the intramural program on what the real significance of the activity is. The lessons learned from the Academy's intramural sports, like any sporting experiences, are many. But what should be most important from the institution's perspective is not for the cadets to walk away from the intramural program with some specific sporting skills, but to learn greater lessons of values and character that will transcend the realm of sports and will be present in all aspects of their future lives as officers and leaders.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The strength of this study is that it focuses on a single institution that is known for its emphasis on character development. At the institution, it focuses on a single program that has character development as one of its primary goals. There were no other goals or objectives of the program that could possibly conflict with character development efforts. Because of these characteristics, the intramural program presented an almost clinical environment to overlay other research findings in order to determine the program's effectiveness at character development. Because there was such a high correlation of the research findings to the environment of the intramural program, the data presented was

less likely to be misapplied. Furthermore, the recommendations made are not drastic to implement, but they can have dramatically profound affects on the program's ability to achieve its goals. Many educational institutions and organizations conduct sports programs for a number of reasons. As long as their reasons do not conflict with character development and character development is a primary goal for the program, then this study can be relevant and its findings can have use.

The weakness of this study is that a review of a process and methodology is less exact than a quantitative evaluation with empirical data to support it. Without this data, the conclusions drawn by this study are less compelling.

Another weakness is that these findings and recommendations are not transferable to every sports program. They were made after examining a single program at a single institution. Its goals are conducive to character development, and character development is indeed a major reason for the program's existence. But these findings and recommendations are not as easily applied to other sports programs such as intercollegiate athletic programs.

Even though many intercollegiate sports programs have character development as a goal, the goal and pressures of winning often conflict with positive character development. The negative affects of sports on moral reasoning and moral development are greatest in contact, revenue-producing sports (Stoll 2000). Among the greatest reasons for these program's existence is to produce revenue for the institution, not at character development of its athletes. Also, these sporting competitions do not lend themselves to having the structure of the events changed to include points for positive

behavior. Because of this, the recommendations of this study are not transferable to these activities.

Recommendations for Further Research

In conducting this study, several other areas for further research presented themselves. The primary one is research aimed at determining more specific and detailed data on the effectiveness of differing methodologies of character development in sports. The more traditional methodologies for character development in non athletic educational settings, such as inculcation, moral development, and others have been studied extensively. But the same cannot be said for differing approaches conducted in sports. More research needs to be conducted that examines the different ways to develop character within sports and assess their effectiveness.

The opportunity also presents itself for further research in the area of character development in sports at the Air Force Academy. The Academy's intramural program can be studied to determine if it actually is effective at developing moral reasoning in the cadets. With the Academy having no moral intervention strategy, the effect of implementing one at the Air Force Academy could be examined to determine its effectiveness. In addition, the long-term effects of the strategy at West Point could be researched to determine if their program has had long term affects and whether it could be further refined. Also, there exists the ability to study the effects of such a strategy partially implemented at the Air Force Academy, thereby giving the ability to compare the effectiveness of a moral intervention strategy compared to a large control group that did not have one within the same institution.

Conclusion

The information available on character development in all of education is broad and difficult to discern due to the differing understandings of what character is and how it is best developed. This was the case when examining the intramural sports program at the Air Force Academy. Once this confusion can be overcome, more effective processes can be developed to achieve the goals that educators focused on character development agree need to be addressed.

Sports are an excellent example of this problem in all of education. There are differing definitions of character, different understandings of how it is developed, and therefore different processes with varying degrees of effectiveness for achieving it. Many of them are founded on assumptions that are just not true. Participation in sports is not necessarily an overall positive experience. It can be a very negative experience, hindering the development of positive moral reasoning and character development as well. Therefore, simply participating in sports will not consistently develop character. What needs to be done by institutions is to identify why they want their members to participate in sports, and then gear the structure of the sporting competitions to best achieve those goals. If the goal of sport is to develop character in its participants, a process or component of the experience has to be present to provide a set of educational experiences and self-understandings that help the participants confront character development challenges directly and with success. A goal of the Academy's intramural program is to develop character, but the process for how it attempts to accomplish it is by simply participating in sports alone. The Academy needs to insert a moral intervention

strategy into its intramural program to enable it to better accomplish this goal. One possible model program that the Academy could implement is present at West Point.

Without moral intervention strategies, sports are nothing more than activities that can be fun, but offer no more potential to reliably and consistently develop character than are present in a game of chance. One of the primary missions of the United States Air Force Academy is to develop character in its cadets. By implementing the recommendations in this study, it will establish a character development process within the intramural sports program to do just that.

APPENDIX A

**BY ORDER OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT**



**HQ UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
MISSION DIRECTIVE 29**

14 JANUARY 1999

DIRECTORATE OF ATHLETICS

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OPR: HQ USAFA/XPM
(Mr Brodecki)
Supersedes USAFAMD 29, 17 September 1996

Certified by: HQ USAFA/XPM
(Lt Col Burlingame)
Pages: 3
Distribution: F&X

This mission directive prescribes the mission, organization, and responsibilities of the Directorate of Athletics, Headquarters United States Air Force Academy, Colorado.

- 1. Authority.** AFI 38-101, as implemented by DAF/PE 680r, letter, Organization Action Affecting Certain United States Air Force Academy Units, and Special Order Number GS-4, Headquarters US Air Force Academy, 21 October 1994.
- 2. Mission.** Provide all cadets realistic leadership experience in a mentally and physically challenging environment. Prepare and motivate cadets for a lifetime of service through physical education, fitness training and testing, and intramural and intercollegiate athletic competition. Generate major portion of revenue necessary to operate multimillion dollar athletic program. Promote the Academy to the nation through athletics.
- 3. Organization.** The Directorate of Athletics is assigned to the Headquarters US Air Force Academy. The Directorate of Athletics is comprised of the Athletic Director, Vice Athletic Director, Senior Women's Administrator/Associate Athletic Director, Candidate Counseling, Sports Medicine, Director of Business Operations, Director of Support, Director of Athletic Programs, and 27 intercollegiate sports.
- 4. Responsibilities:**
 - 4.1. Director of Athletics.** Plans, directs, and provides oversight for the US Air Force Academy's Athletic Department consisting of 27 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) intercollegiate programs, physical education curriculum, fitness testing, the cadet intramural program, sports medicine division, candidate counseling, and associated support activities. Provides oversight for all business affairs for the Air Force Academy Athletic Association (AFAAA). Represents the Academy at NCAA conference level and other related athletic forums.

4.2. Director of Business Operations. Provides budget planning, financial services, and internal control functions for all appropriated and nonappropriated fund activities of the Athletic Department. Directs and manages business operations to include all gift shops and concessions. Provides supervisory oversight for all contracting, licensing, and procurement activities. Through the Sports Information office, provide sports information assistance in coordinating contact between the media and the athletic department and athletic teams.

4.3. Candidate Counseling. Coordinates all admission support activities for 27 intercollegiate sports within the Athletic Department. Coordinates all actions between AH and the Director of Admissions. Oversees all medical monitoring of identified cadet candidates with the DoD Medical Review Board and Command Surgeon. Coordinates all actions for the selection of endorsed athletes for appointment and preparatory school. Maintains oversight of all Congressional actions as required for all recruited athletes. Coordinates all actions required between Air Force Liaison Officers and the Athletic Department personnel.

4.4. Sports Medicine. The Sports Medicine Division is responsible for providing state-of-the-art injury prevention and rehabilitation protocols to USAF Academy cadets. This includes the optimum development of human performance skills by all members of the cadet wing.

4.5. Athletic Programs. Responsible for the day-to-day operation of intercollegiate, intramural, physical education, and fitness testing programs. Oversees a multifaceted physical education program consisting of 26 physical education courses of instruction, taught to 590 sections and 4,000 cadets. Manages a major college-level National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) intercollegiate sports program consisting of varsity and junior varsity teams. Responsible for supply and equipment budget in excess of \$1 million.

4.6. Athletic Support. The Support Division is to support the USAFA athletic program through facility preparation, equipment repair, and acquisition of supplies and equipment for the directorate. Plan, coordinate, and program facility upgrades and renovations with the 10 CEG. Provides administrative, logistical, and management support for the USAFA athletic teams, Falcon Sports Camps, and all athletic-related events.

4.7. Intercollegiate Athletic Teams. Responsible for the management and oversight of their respective teams within established NCAA and conference guidelines and regulations, and adherence to applicable USAFA, DoD, and Air Force instructions and policies. Responsibilities include: planning and organization of all recruiting efforts, supply and equipment ordering, budget planning, scheduling of athletic contests, and team management.

4.8. Senior Women's Administrator. Supervises seven intercollegiate men's and women's teams. Responsible for the NCAA compliance office, and coordinates recruiting with the candidate counseling office.

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5. Relationship to Other Units or Agencies. Direct communication with other US Air Force Academy agencies, Headquarters US Air Force, Secretary of the Air Force, other US Air Force MAJCOMs, and other Department of Defense agencies and activities is authorized.

THOMAS G. RACKLEY, Col, USAF
Director of Plans & Programs

APPENDIX B

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
34th Training Group (USAFA)
USAF Academy CO 80840

AFCW INSTRUCTION 34-101
7 August 1999

Morale, Welfare, Recreation, and Services
INTRAMURAL SPORTS PROGRAM

This instruction prescribes objectives and procedures to be followed in the USAFA Intramural Sports Program. The Department of Athletics (AH) will establish a program to develop the character and qualities of leadership required of an Air Force officer through the intramural program. This instruction requires the collection and maintenance of information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. The authorities to collect and maintain the records prescribed in this regulation are 10 USC 9349 and E.O. 9397. The requester will show, and on request give, the affected individual a privacy act statement for each form, format, or form letter used to collect personal data, before asking for the information.

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None

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Supersedes: AFCWI 34-101, 4 Jan 99
OPR: AHPM (Capt Watson)

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Chapter 1 – General

1.1. The Intramural Sports Program at the USAF Academy exists for the following reasons:

1.1.1. To provide leadership experience by giving cadets the opportunity to supervise, coach, manage, and officiate squadron intramural teams.

1.1.2. To develop a positive attitude toward physical fitness, sportsmanship, and competitiveness in each cadet.

1.1.3. To familiarize each cadet with the administration of an intramural athletic program.

AFCWI 34-101, 7 August 1999

1.1.4. To promote physical fitness in each cadet.

Chapter 2 – Duties and Responsibilities

2.1. Organizational Structure: Located in Figure 2-1 is the Administrative Chain of Command. Located in Figure 2-2 is the Operational Chain of Command.

2.1.1. The Administrative Chain of Command exists to foster a smooth flow for accountability collection, and reporting and roster maintenance.

APPENDIX C

AHOI 537-1 XX-XXX-2000

Chapter 3

INTRAMURAL DIVISION (AHPM)

3-1. Purpose: The Intramural Sports Program at the USAF Academy exists:

- a. To develop in each cadet leadership and character traits that foster teamwork, discipline, perseverance, self confidence, emotional control, physical courage, an ability to overcome adversity and a highly competitive attitude.
- b. To promote physical fitness in each cadet.
- c. To provide leadership experience by giving cadets the opportunity to supervise, coach, manage, and officiate squadron intramural teams and intramural athletic programs.

3-2. Key Cadet Staff Positions:

- a. Wing Athletic Officer (WAO): The WAO is a senior cadet in charge of all cadet intramural staff members and is responsible for the overall operation and execution of the cadet intramural program.
- b. Group Athletic Officers (GAO): The group athletic officers are in charge of the administrative issues of their group, including accuracy of accountability reports generated by the Squadron Athletic Officers (SAO). Other duties include:
 - (1) Generate accountability report and ensure it is accurate and submitted to AHPM by the designated date and time.
 - (2) Supply cadets to fill the positions of officials, group cadets in charge, and league sport managers. They will work closely with their SAO to select these individuals.
 - (3) The GAO will make roster changes in the Cadet Accountability Management Information System (CAMIS) for all squadrons in his/her group. He/she will do this with assistance from the Group Athletic Noncommissioned Officer (GANCO).
- c. Squadron Athletic Officers (SAO): The SAOs are in charge of the administrative duties of their squadrons. Their key duties are to:
 - (1) Build and maintain accurate team rosters throughout the intramural season.
 - (2) Take roll for his/her teams using the SAO book (the SAO book will be kept in the AHPM office). He/she will take roll while teams are on the playing fields.
- d. League Manager (LM): The LMs will be the GAOs. Groups 1 and 2 athletic officers are in charge of "M" league while groups 3 and 4 athletic officers are in charge of "T" League. In addition to the administrative duties the operational duties of the LM's are to:

APPENDIX D

21 Feb 00

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF ATHLETIC PROGRAMS, USAFA

FROM: David Gould, Major, USAF, Master's Degree Candidate, USACGSC

Subject: Character Development in the Intramural Program

1. What are the goals/desired outcomes of the intramural sports program?

- To provide a leadership experience for cadets.
- To develop a positive attitude toward physical fitness, sportsmanship, and competitiveness.

2. Is character development a specific goal/desired outcome of the intramural sports program?

Absolutely. Just about everything we have them involved with here on a daily basis should help shape part of their character while they're here. Although I do not think it develops their character from scratch, I do think it helps shape it for the future merely by shaping their actions in the way they approach intramurals. The more competitive athletes will prepare better for a contest or the season and develop habits which I believe directly shape their character. In fact, even the athletes who do not prepare are still shaping their character as well through their habits, good or bad.

3. If not, is there a reason why it is not?

4. If yes, what specifically, concerning character, does the intramural sports program attempt to accomplish in its cadet participants? (i.e. the Academy's eight Character Development Outcomes, etc.)

As I said above, it forces them to develop habits which shape their character and the way they will approach different situations, whether it's something competitive or not.

5. *How does the intramural program specifically attempt to develop character in its participants?*

Although it is not as intense or competitive as an intercollegiate program, we still try to place the cadets in a competitive situation where they will have to prepare to win. With the intramural program being mandatory you will not see the same personal dedication and sacrifice to become the best as you would with the intercollegiate program. We try to motivate and reward them, but it is not the same. I believe the strongest character traits are developed from within an individual, with a desire to be the best. This trait is strongest with the intercollegiate athlete as they are competing with best.

6. *Does the intramural program have any specific components or methodologies (moral intervention strategies) for attempting to develop character in its participants?*

Do not think so. Not sure.

7. *Does the athletic department attempt to assess the character development of the cadets as a result of their participation in intramurals?*

We try to assess everything that motivates them to win at intramurals. By doing this, we can look at every successful team's approach to winning and determine what habits or traits they possess which makes them different. We try to reward those habits or traits tied to winning. We not only award points for squadron of the year competition, but we take those Wing Champions and go against other Universities' intramural champions. They represent the Academy with official playing uniforms and all just as an intercollegiate team would. Does this develop character? Maybe not directly for everyone, but if it is important enough to some cadets to the point that they change their behavior and form habits to help them win, then yes, I think it does play a part in building character.

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